

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated March 22, 2004. Claim 13 is pending.

Claim 13 stands rejected under Section 102(b) as being allegedly anticipated by Marier.

This Section 102(b) rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claim 13 requires "wherein a plane defined by a top surface of said engine deck is at a higher elevation than a plane defined by said platform in an area proximate said rear end of said engine deck; and wherein a rear end of the engine deck extends rearwardly beyond a front edge of at least one of the drive wheels, and is located forward of said vertical plane." For example, Figs. 1-2 of the instant application illustrate that the rear end of the engine deck 13 extends rearwardly beyond the front edges of drive wheels 23, 25, and is located forward of said vertical plane which passes through 61.

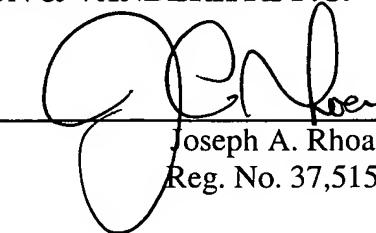
The cited art fails to disclose or suggest the aforesaid underlined aspect of claim 13. In particular, Fig. 3 of Marier illustrates an alleged engine deck which supports engine 60. In this regard, the engine deck in Fig. 3 of Marier is the approximately U-shaped support below engine 60, and is not frame 12. It can be seen in Fig. 3 of Marier that the rear end of Marier's engine deck is located well forward of the front edge of the wheel 30 and thus does not extend rearwardly beyond a front edge thereof as called for in claim 13 (when the wheel 30 is in the solid line position). Moreover, there is not suggestion in the art of record for modifying Marier to meet the invention of claim 13.

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully requested that all rejections be withdrawn. Claim 13 is believed to be in condition for allowance. If any minor matter remains to be resolved, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned with regard to the same.

WRIGHT et al.
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Respectfully submitted,

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